

Wishing you a Joyous Easter

IDEAL FACES OF THE LORD CHRIST

The Conceptions the World's
Great Artists Have Had of
the Divine Face.

About the appearance of no other person in history is there so much conjecture and doubt. "Thou art the most beautiful among men." Thus wrote the Prophet Isaiah of Christ.

The oldest portrait known to exist, if it is a portrait, is up to this day in a vault of the Catacombs San Prostantino, on the Via Appia, Rome. It is a fresco, painted on the wall, dating from the first half of the second century, and represents the Biblical story of Christ and the Jewish woman, who, by touching his garment, was healed of an affection of the blood. Christ is pictured in the dress of a Roman youth, with short hair and toga.

Some years ago a marble head was unearthed in Athens, which is supposed to be a part of a statue of Christ. The type is not Greek. The eyes are raised to heaven, and the face is dignified and full of devotional feeling.

The Christian artists of the third century created a type of the Saviour less youthful and more serious than those of the period preceding theirs.

The halo is first noticed, surrounding the head of Christ, in a painting in the Catacombs, dating from the sixth century. It is, however, not a Christian invention, but an attribute generally conceded to the gods and the Roman emperors.

About the same time artists began to further adorn pictures of Christ by holy symbols and landscapes of the country in which He lived and preached. We often find the Saviour represented as the good shepherd carrying a lamb on his shoulder while others surround him. The fish symbol was first used by the artists of the Middle Ages.

The oldest bearded type of Christ we find revived in a Bible of the time of Charlemagne, dating, probably, from the end of the eighth century. It does not seem to have pleased the Christians, however, and the artists of the Middle Ages again accepted the bearded Christ as the ideal representation, though they did not follow a stipulated likeness. All represent the face of Christ as that of an earnest man, with long, semi-straight hair surrounding the face, with a mustache and chin beard. The lips are sharply cut, the eyes wide open. About that time an alleged "true description" of the face and figure of the Saviour became generally known. It was said to have been written by a Roman officer or Governor of Jerusalem named Lentulus, Pilate's predecessor.

Lentulus wrote: "Christ has an open forehead, on which never a cloud settled, a face without wrinkles or spots, beautified by a suspicion of red. His nose and mouth are correctly and nobly drawn, the beard is of good growth, short and divided at the chin.

"It has the color of the hair, dark and glossy. The hair is divided in the middle and falls down on his shoulders, as is the fashion in Nazareth. The eyes are of bluish-gray color, clear and beautiful."

This description fitted the type already generally accepted. Its genuineness is doubted, however. Nevertheless, it appears to have inspired Albrecht Durer in his celebrated drawing known as the "Cloth of St. Veronica."

The Greek Church did not permit artists as much license in selecting types, nor did it permit them to picture Christ otherwise than in his Godlike majesty and dignity. A very interesting picture is that in the Mosque Kahelje Deschani in Constantinople, which was formerly a Catholic Church belonging to the Convent Chora. It is a mosaic. The Turk sitting at the feet of Christ is supposed to be the founder of the mosque.

While the artists of the Middle Ages, generally speaking, laid, perhaps, too much stress in their pictorial representations on Christ's qualities as ruler of the universe, the painters of the Renaissance period represent him as the ideal of love and devotion. The Christ pictures of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael picture Christ as the ideal man.

Artists of to-day who attempt to paint the Saviour are clever in resource. Fearing to attempt the Divine Face, they conceal it without appearing to do so. In one of the recent paintings the light falls full upon the face of the Saviour with such brilliancy that the outline alone is visible. In the foreground are the apostles.

Not only do artists object to painting the face of the Saviour because of its uncertainty in color and style, but because they fear to portray divinity. The least look of worldliness, the smallest trace of self-consciousness, or of any other distinctively worldly attribute, and it would not be the Christ.

With such difficulties as these the artists who paint Christ have to deal.

FIVE-MINUTE EASTER SERMONS BY THREE FAMOUS PEOPLE.

EASTER RENEWS

LIFE AND HOPE.

By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

A request for an "opinion of Easter" reminds me of something I once heard Phillips Brooks say. I had quoted with unnecessary respect (so I was quickly made to feel) the views of an agnostic lecturer, himself "not important if true," touching some point of current religious

AT THIS SEASON

THERE IS LIFE.

By Edward Everett Hale.

Life, and the enlargement of life, make the blessing of Easter and the Easter season. At any moment when preachers, poets, or other voices of the church dwell simply upon immortality, as if that were the only lesson of Easter, they depre-

NOW IS THE TIME

TO SEEK GOD.

By Ballington Booth.

The death of Christ vindicated the broken law of God, and in doing so revealed the awful nature of sin. By it God was enabled, without being untrue to the principles of eternal righteousness, to forgive the sins of all who are not too proud to repent of the same and to accept by faith a personal interest in the death of



THE THREE MARYS AT THE TOMB, BY SPANGENBERG.

discussion. Dr. Brooks drew himself to his grand height and gave to his head that lofty look which we all remember.

"The idea," he said, superciliously, "of a nationing the Christian religion on the back!"

It occurs to me that I am not the person to put Easter day upon the back. But, since it is asked, let it be briefly said that, of the whole range of church festivals, to one reared in an ecclesiastical atmosphere, which does not cultivate them, the solemnization of Easter seems the one supremely attractive and beautiful custom. It has so woven itself into our religious life that to omit it would almost seem like omitting the resurrection itself. It is the one religious celebration about which there cannot be two minds—if there are minds attached to Christian hearts. Easter renews hope, it strengthens faith, quickens charity. It comforts bereavement and reproaches doubt and stimulates consecration. It is an unanswerable argument for Christianity. It is the blossom of the Christian year.

elate the meaning of this great festival. Indeed, it may be said that the word "everlasting" in King James' version of Scripture, where our Bibles speak of "everlasting life," is not sufficient for the idea which the Saviour always impresses.

He speaks of infinite life—life unmeasured. He says that he has come "that men might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." As the season is renewed under the love of God, as the memories of the Saviour's resurrection come back to us, we are to remember that He gave new life to the world, not simply in showing to men that their personal lives are continued beyond the grave, but in quickening life in all its relations. Indeed, the whole world was changed. He makes the world shake off its burial clothes, break open its tombs, and start to a life that is alive. If we had no New Testament the history of the world at large is enough to show that, nineteen centuries ago, a world which had been dead began to live.

Jesus; also give such persons the power to live holy lives. The resurrection demonstrated the divinity of Christ's nature, and proved that the atonement made had achieved the victory over death, the penalty of sin, as well as over sin itself.

So far as I know the celebrations of Easter, both past and present, have consisted and do consist chiefly of forms and ceremonies of little use to professing Christians and still less to the ungodly round about them.

The best symbolization of the triumph of our Lord's Easter, to me, is the rising into newness of life of some sinner by finding salvation both for this world and the next. Scarcely less beautiful to me is the deliverance of some child of God from the grave-clothes of custom, tradition, and respectability, and his going out to live for God alone at all costs. In these cases music is seldom lacking, either of voice or heart, and the lovely flowers of white lilies follow as matters of course.

THE FLOWERS OF EASTER DAY

Nature Gives Them So Freely to
Spring That All May Wear
Them Now.

The bells of Easter ringing.
Call up the dower buds springing;
Poets tune their rhyming,
To sound of Easter chiming.

The Easter hat is no more an adjunct of Easter than the Easter flower which, at this time of year, seems not to blossom in the ground but in the lapel of matron and maid, and of man and boy.

From the gorgeous Easter rose which costs two dollars, to the more modest lily at a quarter, down to the pinch of violets at three cents, there are flowers for all and one left over for the little cash girl who spends a penny for a bloom.

Nothing dresses up an Easter suit like a bunch of violets in the button hole, and this fact with others makes violets of all the Easter flowers the most sought for as a personal decoration.

For the house, the church and the window, the Easter lily holds precedence.

Easter without flowers would be like the play of "Hamlet" not only with the part of the melancholy Dane left out but with Ophelia also eliminated from the cast.

In Japan each blossom has a festival of its own, but the most proceressive nation on the globe has leisure for only one carnival of flowers a year, and Easter is a fitting time for its celebration, the name of the day being merely, a corruption of that of Eosture, in the rude Anglo-Saxon mythology the goddess of spring.

A festival of flowers it truly is, even in the city, where the shrine of Flora is represented by a shop in the business district and the deity herself is propitiated solely by offerings from Fraule Sam's mint. Perhaps, indeed, like many other traditional celebrations, this one thrives best in the metropolis where Strophon need not risk a cold by gathering flowers himself for Phyllis, and may by the variety of his offerings convey a hint as to not only his sentimentality, but financial stability.

At Easter the city is gay. Indeed, with flowers; it is the season when even the most artistic of florists contrives a new combination of colors for his show window; when the big department stores become temporary greenhouses; and when alien windows, hitherto devoted to the display of the fruit or the literature of commerce, are invaded by an army of violets, roses, and lilies.

Then, too, shopdoorways in the business thoroughfares are converted into flourishing flower stands and arid curbstones put forth an affluence of blossoming pots and baskets, while wondrous erstwhile dedicated to the carrying of oranges or fish, waft delicious odors on their way, and the drivers thereof add a melancholy crescendo of "Fresh flowers" to their repertoire. Then likewise does Beauty adorn herself with all the blooms which her own purse or those of her admirers can provide.

In this bright season, too, it is a poor window, whether draped in costly lace or shaded by oft washed dimity, which gives no hint of potted or cut flowers; and the woman is unfortunate indeed whose attire displays no single blossom. Then even last year's jacket gains a belated faintness with a knot of violets in its lapel, while as for the newest creation, it dazzles the beholder with the additional glory of its cluster of American Beauties.

The young man's fancy likewise lightly turns to a more enormous boutonniere than any one save a glass of fashion dare indulge in, while the older one adds a carnation and a shame-faced smile to his belongings. Half forgotten, involuntarily brought to mind just now and showered with blossoms, and old friends who live "quite too far away to visit, you know," are remembered through the florist with a bunch of roses and a card.

The churches, too, after their long period of Lenten gloom, are decorated with palms and serried ranks of blossoms, so that the parting of their doors sends into the street a perfume of heaven's own sweetness, and all things tell of joy and the resurrection.

At a time like this who can help but smile? Why, even Phyllis soon forgets to pucker up her brows because Strophon with a man's blindness has sent her a corsage in which the colors are at variance with those of her little Easter gown. Daphne, too, ere long dispels her grief that Narcissus has forgotten to send her any at all and smilingly accepts the timely offering of old Moneybags.

And how many stop to wonder when all the flowers so lavishly displayed first see the light?

Each of the large growers has his own specialty in which he yields the palm to none, yet each one pays due attention to the popular flowers as well as the trinity of the poets, the rose, the lily, and the violet.

EASTER BELLS WAKE ALL THE EARTH

Waterbury